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SUBJECT: DAY OF SOLIDARITY WITH CUBAN PEOPLE - VIETNAM RESPONSE

REF: STATE 45792

[1](#)1. (SBU) Mission Vietnam has considered activities for May 21 - Day of Solidarity with the Cuban People. We will continue to raise our concerns about Cuba discreetly to key players in the GVN. In view of local considerations, however, we have not scheduled any public outreach activities.

[1](#)2. (SBU) These considerations include the fact that Vietnam is a traditional Communist ally of the Cuban government, and - at present - Vietnam's state-controlled press will not allow any piece directly or indirectly critical of the Cuban government. In fact, activism on our part could spark a concerted propaganda counter attack, which could prove effective in negatively affecting views towards the United States. Any activity highlighting the plight of political prisoners, in particular, would lead the regime to react, considering that Vietnam has political prisoners of its own.

[1](#)3. (SBU) The (relatively) good news is that, despite its long history of ties with Cuba, Vietnam does not have extensive relations and there is a very small number of Cubans living in Vietnam. Over time, we expect that continued progress in our bilateral relations will erode the affinity still felt by some for the Cuban regime and people. In future years, with continued progress, we will be better positioned to contribute to these global efforts.

[1](#)4. (U) This cable was coordinated with ConGen Ho Chi Minh City.
MICHALAK